

Organic Matters

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER • WINTER 2021



2 New Study Shows Benefits of Organic Diet

4 2020 – A Year of Challenges and Opportunities

8 Reflections on Major Milestones

10 Fall 2020 NOSB Meeting Recap



Organically Speaking

The New Year is finally upon us! With the on-going delivery of COVID-19 vaccines, we all look forward to being able to gather again without worry, but we are still in the middle of navigating new ways of doing many things, personally and professionally. I hope you all found creative ways to engage with family and friends over the course of the holiday season, as well as had some time to refresh and recharge for the challenges ahead in 2021.

The transition back to 'normal' deserves our attention, since we can use any time of transition to integrate many lessons-learned into new and better ways of being and doing business. We are often in such a hurry to get from A to B that we forget the importance of being present in these transitional periods. As we emerge from deep winter in the coming months, I hope you will share your lessons-learned with others that may benefit from them, including those of us at PCO. There are two upcoming occasions listed below where we hope to hear from you and pass along some updates, information, or training to you in return. Please keep an eye on your mail/email for further details and registration information:

- **Annual Member Meeting**

April 8th, to be held virtually with call-in by phone option

- **Annual Inspector Training for staff and PCO inspectors**

March 26th, to also be held virtually

As we begin 2021, there is more focus on the link between human health and the environment. We continue to endure challenges in general and in agriculture: unprecedented and extreme droughts, floods, fires; threats from disease and pests; safety and availability of labor force; distribution of goods during emergencies; and a very unpredictable climate. Amazingly, in the organic agriculture industry, we have continued to adapt and even thrive as the public's attention is drawn more to what we eat and how it affects our health, as Organic Trade Association's 2020 Organic Industry Survey indicated. We have so far seen the resiliency of our sector, underscoring the need for continued support of organic production and acres in transition.



Source: Organic Trade Association's 2020 Organic Industry Survey conducted 2/7/2020-3/27/2020 (\$mil., consumer sales).

Sustained growth in our sector will come with the public's awareness of how organic agriculture can meet many of our current and future challenges. Here are just a few:

- Healthy, unpolluted ecosystems support biodiversity and pollinator populations
- Healthy soils help with resiliency to drought and flood and are carbon sinks
- Eliminating harmful chemicals and pesticides produces less pollution (in production and use) and food that doesn't introduce those into our bodies as workers or consumers

You can read more about the link between diet and the presence of chemicals in our bodies in a recent study published in *Environmental Research*, a brief summary of which you will find on page 2 of this publication. In more and more ways, we are seeing that significant changes in the conventional food system are necessary to ensure a future with healthy people and a healthy planet, and we look forward to doing that work with you!

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VISION

All communities are enriched through organic food and farming

MISSION

To ensure the integrity of organic products and serve our farming community

CORE VALUES

- 1. People & Service** – Keep people at the center of every action, interaction, and decision
- 2. Organic Spirit & Environment** – Promote restorative practices that improve the world for future generations
- 3. Honesty & Integrity** – Embrace transparency and integrity in all our work.

Organic Matters

WINTER 2021



FEATURES

2 New Study Shows Just One Week of Organic Eating Dramatically Reduces Pesticide Exposure

Levels of detected chemicals dropped an average of 60.5 percent with a range of 37 percent to 95 percent

4 2020 – A Year of Challenges and Opportunities

PCO-certified farmers share stories of resiliency through Covid-19 pandemic

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8 Reflections on Major Milestones and Opportunities for Growth

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10 Fall 2020 NOSB Meeting Recap

NOSB passed four new proposals, one resolution, and 12 recommendations for removal of substances from the National List

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Cover photo: Winter orchard, Debra Deis

New Study Shows Just One Week of Organic Eating Dramatically Reduces Pesticide Exposure

Levels of detected chemicals dropped an average of 60.5 percent with a range of 37 percent to 95 percent

Photo: University of Arkansas

DIANA KOBUS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Levels of the pesticide glyphosate in study participants' bodies dropped an average of 70% after just six days on an organic diet. Study results show food consumption as a primary pathway through which the general population is exposed and can reduce exposure to this and many other pesticides and chemicals.

The peer-reviewed study: *Organic Diet Intervention Significantly Reduces Urinary Glyphosate Levels in U.S. Children and Adults*, was published in 2020 in the journal *Environmental Research*, and the results clearly indicate that an **organic diet rapidly and dramatically reduces exposure to toxic pesticides**, including glyphosate, organophosphates, pyrethroids, neonicotinoids and 2,4-D. The scope and degree of harm caused from exposure to these chemicals was not part of the study, but farming organically prohibits the use of these and many other toxic pesticides allowed in conventional farming.

While the study sample is small, the findings are statistically significant. Participants were four racially diverse families from Minneapolis, Minnesota; Atlanta, Georgia; Baltimore, Maryland; and Oakland, California. Urine samples were collected from parents and children eating their typical diet of conventional food for six days, and again during a controlled diet of all organic food for six days.

Following the change in diet, the study demonstrated reductions in exposure to many of these chemicals, particularly glyphosate, which researchers found in 100 percent of the participants, including children as young as four. The average level of glyphosate in children was approximately five times higher than in adults.

"It's striking that levels of this toxic pesticide dropped so dramatically after less than a week. Given our results and

related studies on how an organic diet rapidly reduces pesticide exposure, we could expect to see similar reductions in glyphosate levels in most Americans if they switched to an organic diet," said study co-author Kendra Klein, PhD, senior staff scientist at Friends of the Earth. "That's the good news. The bad news is that most of us are eating glyphosate-laden food continuously, resulting in daily doses of the chemical from breakfast through dinner."

While the synergistic effects of exposure to this toxic soup of pesticides is largely unknown, it is important to note that harm can come from minute exposures to individual chemicals. The degree of potential harm that can be caused is different for each stage of development, particularly with endocrine disrupting chemicals, and it's important to note that the smaller the organism, the higher the concentration or dose. Often when acceptable levels of chemicals are set through federal regulation and policy, they reference adult human exposure levels, disregarding the exponential differences in exposure levels to children and developing fetuses, which could lead to damage that lasts a lifetime. Even though the human body might be able to break down and eliminate many of these harmful chemicals up to certain threshold amounts, it is the consistency with which we ingest these chemicals through diet as we eat them all day that also increases the opportunity for toxic effects.

According to a Friends of the Earth August 11, 2020, news release, "Since the 1990s, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency has facilitated increased dietary exposure to glyphosate by **raising the legal threshold** for residues of glyphosate up to 300 times previous levels for certain foods. The chemical is also increasingly being used on foods like wheat, oats and beans just before harvest to uniformly desiccate crops, a use that has been shown to lead to high levels of **glyphosate residue on food**."

This is significant, since desiccation is not listed as an approved use for this chemical, and the practice increases residues found in the food product(s), further increasing exposure. When a chemical like glyphosate is approved for use on crops, certain assumptions are made in the evaluation based on exposure to, and chemical breakdown in, the natural environment, reducing the chemical's potency and concentration in the final crop. When these chemicals are used for unapproved application purposes, such as desiccation of crops, there is not the same opportunity for dilution or degradation of the chemical in the natural environment, and concentrations of the chemicals in the food product are increased.

The good news from this study is how quickly our bodies can eliminate these chemicals once we eliminate exposure to them through diet, proving that our work to maintain organic integrity for people and the planet is essential!

Organic production practices keep these harmful chemicals out of your body when you consume food, but by eliminating them from use, we also protect farmers, farmworkers, and food handlers from consistent, potent workplace exposure to these chemicals as well. Add to that the many environmental protections and ecosystem benefits that come with an organic, regenerative approach to agriculture, and it becomes clear that the healthiest future is an organic one.

"We all have the right to food that is free of toxic pesticides," said Klein, "but our federal regulatory system is broken and is not protecting us. We urgently need our elected leaders to make healthy organic food the norm for everyone by passing policies that support farmers to shift from

pesticide-intensive to organic farming."

2020 has also shown us the importance of equitable access to healthy, organic food and resources, "During the coronavirus pandemic, the inequities of our food system have become ever more clear," said Sharyle Patton, Director of the Commonwealth Biomonitoring Resources Center and co-author of the study. "Research shows that communities of color are at higher risk of serious complications and death from coronavirus as a result of already suffering from higher rates of diet-related diseases. Now more than ever, we need public policies that ensure that all communities have access to healthy, organic food."

At PCO, we are proud to do our part in ensuring the organic integrity of the crops and products we certify, and we encourage you to read more about this research and study by finding them at the links below.

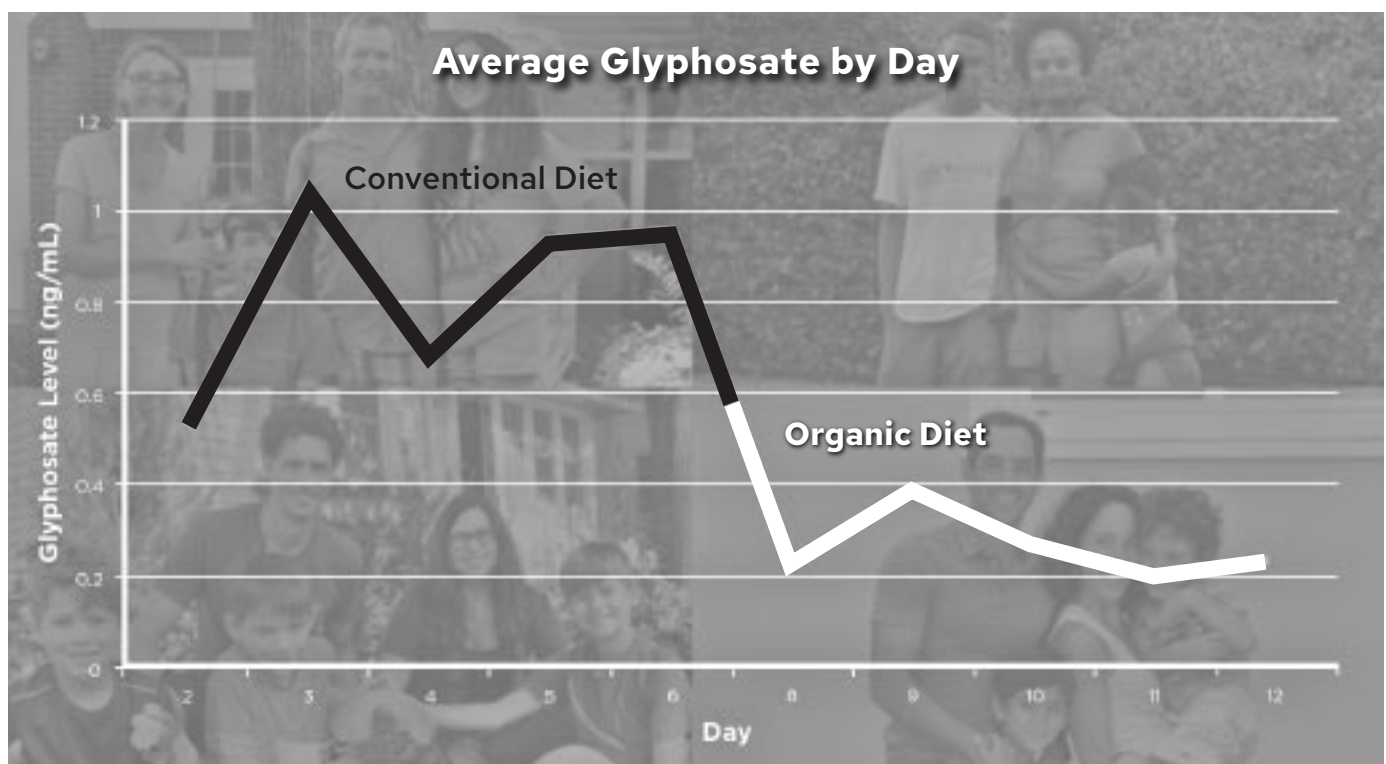
- www.organicforall.org

- Fagan, John, Larry Bohlen, Sharyle Patton, Kendra Klein. 2020. Organic Diet Intervention Significantly Reduces Urinary Glyphosate Levels in U.S. Children and Adults. *Environmental Research*.



Friends of the Earth's Food and Agriculture program works to advance three fundamental shifts in our food system: from chemical-intensive to organic and regenerative; from corporate-controlled to democratically governed; and from a system that embodies the deepest inequities in our society to one that advances social justice and fulfills the needs of all eaters now and into the future.

New Findings! Glyphosate (Aka Roundup) Drops 70% After Six Days On An Organic Diet.



Graphic: Friends of the Earth

2020 – A Year of Challenges and Opportunities

PCO-certified farmers share stories of resiliency through COVID-19 pandemic

STACEY BUDD, EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT/OUTREACH COORDINATOR

As the night skies linger into morning and the earth rests under a blanket of snow, Winter is often a time of reflection and renewal. Pondering, planning and preparing fill our mental space as we recharge for the new year. With 2020 in the rearview mirror, PCO is looking forward to our journey that will be 2021. Before we begin, we wanted to take a moment to reach out and connect with our past membership award recipients to see how they fared during an unanticipated year. A common theme in their stories prevailed – the undeniable spirit of family and service to community!

BORBONUS FAMILY FARM

Matt Borbonus, Farmer

Blairsville, PA

Recipient of the latest *Going the Extra Acre Award*

Matt is a third generation farmer on 200+ acres of family land he uses for the rotational grazing of his herd. Over the years, he converted more of his land to perennial grasses for his cows – building a self-reliant food source and making his transition to a grass-fed operation complete. Matt has been certified with PCO since 2014.

When asked about his early thoughts and actions as the coronavirus began to spread across the country and stay-at-home orders started to take hold, he felt the best approach was to stay calm. Farming doesn't stop as daily tasks and chores need to be done. His family remained committed to keep moving forward no matter what. Matt's strong faith kept him focused on what was in front of him while letting those above him handle what they felt they must. As time went on, the only pivot made was in the procurement of supplies. What was once an in-person transaction became replaced with orders over the phone. Matt's biggest personal challenge was remembering to have a supply of masks handy in the event a trip to town was necessary.

Early on in the pandemic we heard of dairy farmers having to dump their milk as a result of a disrupted food supply chain. Restaurants, schools and institutions were large recipients of milk and their shut downs had a big impact on this outcome. Fortunately Matt, as a

dairy farmer, did not experience such disruptions. As a supplier to Horizon/Danone, he appreciated their efforts in keeping their producers informed. Matt participated in several conference calls with the company throughout 2020 and the protocol and procedures implemented went surprisingly well.

Communities need to be fed and early on the USDA recognized the important role farmers play during this time of uncertainty. Though the first round of funding through their Coronavirus Food Assistance Program (CFAP) was not favorable to organic farmers, the second round provided a better price point for organic sales loss and Matt applied. His existing relationship with the Farm Service Agency helped him secure additional income. Matt's perspective was to utilize programs that were made available to help solidify his family business. In addition, Matt applied and was awarded a small loan from the Small Business Association's (SBA) Payment Protection Program (PPP).



New Infrastructure for the Borbonus Family Farm.

Photo: Matt Borbonus.



Matt Borbonus and family.

As for 2021, Matt's philosophy is business as usual. He plans to continue working towards his business goals just as he did this past year. An important part of his goals is to explore expanding into different direct sale enterprises. Matt's pursuit of this idea will help family members who are experiencing a slowdown of work an opportunity to join him in the family business. Taking care of each other is what it is all about!

How has organic certification helped you and your business during this pandemic?

Matt feels that his organic certification helped solidify his market presence as he witnessed a public shift towards more direct buying and away from commercial food service entities.

Matt's big takeaway:

"And this too (the negativity of COVID) shall pass."

RED HAWK RISE ORGANICS, LLC

Katie Brownell and Mike Herbst, Farmers
Harpers Ferry, WV
Recipients of the latest *Outstanding New Organic Farmer Award*

Mike and Katie own and operate a 3-acre diversified fruit and vegetable farm in the Eastern panhandle of West Virginia. They serve their local food system through farmers markets in the DC area and a community CSA program. Red Hawk Rise Organics has been certified by PCO since 2018.

As the pandemic began to spread in early March, their approach was to wait and see what would happen. Like many others, Mike and Katie hoped the virus would be under control quickly and the spread would be mitigated. Mike and Katie's top priority was to keep their family healthy and safe. As a precautionary measure, they did stock up on all the supplies they anticipated for the growing season, just in case there were difficulties getting them later in the year. Disruptions were minimal for their small-scale operation. Their biggest challenge was the little extra work they put in to secure organically approved leaf mulch, which they use as compost.

On the other hand, Mike and Katie made a big business pivot when they decided not to attend any of their farmers markets this season. Instead they opened an online store where shoppers could purchase vegetables. They used Food4All.com as their platform and have been very pleased with their customer service response time and helpfulness. The decision to provide a contact-free delivery service accompanied the building of their online store. Orders were packed on site for both their CSA customers and the community at-large who were seeking their organic

produce. An added perk of their online store platform is that its companion app created delivery routes, allowing Mike and Katie to efficiently deliver their customer's orders every week.

Like many other families with small children, another pivot for Mike and Katie was adding the additional role of teacher to their repertoire. Having their son home full-time (previously in daycare) and entering Kindergarten, they were creative in arranging their work schedules to homeschool their young one while accomplishing the daily tasks of the farm. Creative scheduling also incorporated trips to a local food pantry to dispense surplus vegetables - a way to share in the abundance with their local community. The absence of farmers markets also gave their family Sundays off to enjoy when possible. All these pivots reinforce Mike and Katie's commitment to the health and

continued on page 6



Mike and Young Son Mulching Garlic Beds.

Photo: Katie Brownell

continued from page 5

safety of their family and community.

Entering into their third growing season, Mike and Katie are grateful to their committed customers who helped them weather this pandemic. These established relationships helped keep their farm moving along and financially afloat. However, they did apply for a SBA Economic Injury Disaster Loan (EIDL) to offset their revenues. Mike and Katie received a modest amount which helped cover a portion of their lost sales.

Looking ahead, Mike and Katie are hoping to return to their markets in 2021. They are spending the offseason figuring out what this will look like and how they can make it work. Though this has been a year of many unknowns, their experience confirmed their customers' desired wishes for more crop variety which will help in their planning for 2021.

How has organic certification helped them and their business during this pandemic?

Mike and Katie shared that being organic growers helps

them build an instant bridge of trust with potential customers. Mike noted that being a two-person, family farm he is sometimes concerned that people won't take them seriously; that they won't realize they are a "real" farm. Being certified organic instantly legitimizes everything they do and gives them instant credibility.

Mike and Katie's big takeaway:

At the beginning of the pandemic, they told themselves to not put too much stock in the outcome of this year. They focused on doing their best and not reading into anything too much. Mike and Katie learned more than they expected: new schedules allowed for more work-life balance; they can successfully care for their son while getting all their work done; and they were able to foster more relationships in their home area and hope to maintain this larger CSA membership going forward.



CARVERSVILLE FARM FOUNDATION

Steve Tomlinson, Farm Manager
Mechanicsville, PA
Recipients of the latest *Sustainability Award*

Carversville Farm Foundation is a non-profit that produces fresh, sustainable food specifically for donation to populations who lack access to a balanced diet while offering workshops and field days to support an understanding of sustainable farming methods. Carversville Farm Foundation has been certified by PCO since 2017.

When the pandemic hit their first concern was for the safety of their workers and donation partners. They quickly came up with policies and safety measures to keep their farm team working safely. Through these efforts, they were able to not skip a beat and kept their crop, livestock and hay making plans on course for the year. However, pivots were

made in that they cancelled farm tours, educational programs, potlucks and group activities to adhere to their safety protocols. In addition, they made the difficult decision to prohibit their volunteers from helping with farm tasks. It seemed too risky to have to screen and distance everyone coming onto the farm. Being a community-minded organization, the energy of volunteers and public gatherings were surely missed! Everyone on the farm loves gathering and talking about agriculture over a good meal. Considering these operational pivots, their team was still able to keep a positive attitude and have a benchmark year in their production. Carversville Farm Foundation relied on the Center for Disease Control (CDC) website to help them



Delivery prep at Carversville Farm Foundation.

Photo: Steve Tomlinson.

navigate risks throughout the year.

With the apparent disruption of our food supply chain, Carversville Farm Foundation saw more people turn to them for food. With the spread of COVID-19, donations to soup kitchens and food banks became a sharp focus for the whole country and amplified Carversville's mission to provide good, nutritious and organic food for people in a tough spot in their lives. In the spring most of Carversville partner soup kitchens shut down due to the outbreak. They too needed to change their models from cooking and serving food to packaging up "to go" meals. To minimize waste, Carversville always produces, harvests and packs specifically for the needs of their partners and the pandemic was no exception. They donated more salad greens packed in half-pound bags than they ever had before. In total, Carversville produced and donated more than 100,000 pounds of vegetables, 23,000 dozen eggs, 20,000 pounds of chicken, turkey and beef as well as 11,115 plant starts to urban farms. Since their inception, these numbers far exceed any previous year of operation. Though they are grateful to be able to make such impactful donations, they do look forward to when their partners can return to their kitchens and cook wonderful food once again for the community!

How has organic certification helped you and your business during this pandemic?

Carversville Farm Foundation believes the organic label adds dignity for our partners being able to receive food that meets the same standards as a high-priced farm market or grocery store. To them, it shows their partners that they cut no corners in the quality of food they produce. It also keeps them on their toes to keep good records, which is essential for any farm to thrive.

Carversville Farm Foundation's big takeaway:

This is a reminder that we are all in this together. People are hungry and we have the ability to feed them. This pandemic highlights the need to help one another and the fragility and importance of our food system. Food insecurity has taken center stage and the need to tackle this problem is more on people's minds than ever before.

A big thanks to Matt Borbonus, Red Hawk Rise Organics and Carversville Farm Foundation for sharing your stories and inspiring us to continue to do the good work in feeding our communities quality, organic food!

Stay tuned for an announcement on our next **Annual Membership Meeting to be held on April 8, 2021.**

New award recipients will be announced as we celebrate our organic community.



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Reflections on Major Milestones and Opportunities for Growth

DIANA KOBUS, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

2021 continues to force us to look at ourselves in a big way, as an organization, as individuals, and as a country. My hope is that when we see or hear things that bring on strong emotional reactions, we will all work harder this year to really take a pause and consider the other person or other viewpoints of whatever challenge comes before us. Our community knows more than most about the importance of maintaining a fertile foundation for growth and about the importance of depending on one another for a fruitful harvest, nourishing each other, and success. Our staff and board will be bringing that mindset to all of our interactions in 2021, and we hope you will join us as we all work towards and through continued change and some major milestones.



Don Kretschmann of Kretschmann's Farm

KRETSCHMANN'S FARM

Just north of Pittsburgh is a family farm whose name is synonymous with the words organic and CSA. While not certified by PCO, Kretschmann's Farm is a pillar of organic farming in Western Pennsylvania, and they are struggling to find successors. The 80 acre certified organic farm has supported a CSA with 1000 customers. Please contact them if you or anyone you know might be interested in maintaining the legacy of this operation, since losing this farm would be losing a true institution of organic production in Pennsylvania. You can read more in the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette article published January 3, 2021 at [newsin-](https://newsin-teractive.post-gazette.com/the-last-harvest/)

[teractive.post-gazette.com/the-last-harvest/](https://newsin-teractive.post-gazette.com/the-last-harvest/) or contact Don Kretschmann through information on their website kretschmannfarm.com/contact.

INTACT PLATFORM

In early spring 2021, PCO will be launching a new database system on a platform specifically designed for organic certification that is fast becoming the industry standard software. You will still have a member portal with the functionalities you're used to utilizing, but it's going to look a little bit different. From the member side, you will see more opportunity to speed up approvals for processes such as changes to certificates, adding acreage, or product review and approval. The biggest shift in implementation of this software will be the streamlining of internal processes offered to staff, which will in turn help us have the time to better serve you. While this change will launch in early spring, our staff will be utilizing as many ways as possible to communicate with you throughout the year about navigating these changes, including in print, via webinars and live trainings, and through FAQs. This change will affect members, inspectors, and staff, so we will all be doing things a little bit differently in 2021. We appreciate your patience in navigating this change with us, as we are certain that significant efficiencies will be accomplished across all areas of the organization!

2020 MEMBER SURVEY RESULTS

Thank you to everyone that submitted survey responses. We are still compiling the results, but here are some preliminary trends:

- Long term clients continue to value their relationship with PCO and recognize our continued commitment to their success.
- Our staff continues to meet the challenges of a diverse client base, many of whom do not use electronic communication methods, and continues to strive to serve everyone in a timely fashion.
- Communication between inspectors and farmers, which is recognized industry-wide as an area for concentrated assessment and attention, is an ongoing priority.
- Cost remains a concern, particularly to those farms not utilizing the USDA cost-share program.

We are actively pursuing solutions to meet the above challenges and many others as we plan for the upcoming year. Your feedback is essential in ensuring that our solutions meet your needs, so please be assured that we hear you, as board and staff of PCO, and we value our role in supporting your operations.

2022: PCO'S 25TH ANNIVERSARY

While we still hold out hope that the later part of 2021 will see us all being able to engage in-person, 2022 will be upon us quickly too, and PCO is planning now for celebrating our 25th anniversary in 2022 all year long! We would love to include as many of you as possible in different ways throughout 2022, so please contact me or our board members with your ideas and requests. I will be taking to the road to visit with some of you as well, so if you're interested in planning a visit and/or educating me about your operation, please reach out. We'd like to get your photos, stories, videos, and anything else you feel will recognize this milestone and your work, ready for sharing. This anniversary is a tribute to the hard work you all do every single day to bring certified organic food to market, in fact that is truly what we'll be celebrating!

Please reach out to me with ideas or feedback on any of the above, and I look forward to meeting you in-person a little further down the road! dkobus@paorganic.org 814-571-3736

This anniversary is a tribute to the hard work you all do every single day to bring certified organic food to market, in fact that is truly what we'll be celebrating!

STAFF RECOGNITION

Our staff continues to support clients through a time of significant change and challenges on many levels, and we all like to become more tech savvy. PCO would also like to recognize the following staff milestones – Congratulations Team!

20 YEARS OF SERVICE

- **Sabine Carey** – Materials Specialist

10 YEARS OF SERVICE

- **Kyla Smith** – Certification Director

5 YEARS OF SERVICE

- **Stephen Hobaugh** – Inspection Program Coordinator
- **Garrick McCullough** – IT Systems Administrator



Sabine
Carey




Kyla Smith



Stephen
Hobaugh




Garrick
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Fall 2020 NOSB Meeting Recap

NOSB passed four new proposals, one resolution, and 12 recommendations for removal of substances from the National List

JEN BERKEBILE, PCO MATERIALS PROGRAM MANAGER

Last October, the National Organic Standards Board (NOSB) met remotely to discuss substances petitioned for addition to or deletion from the National List of Allowed and Prohibited Substances (National List), substances due to sunset from the National List in 2022, and recommendations on organic policies.

The NOSB is a volunteer board made of 15 members who make recommendations to the National Organic Program (NOP). Recommendations may be developed into proposed rules by the NOP, and they may be incorporated into the regulations if they become final rules.

The NOSB typically meets twice per year in various locations around the United States. During meetings, the NOSB listens to public comments, discusses agenda items, and then votes on recommendations to the Secretary in a public forum. The fall meeting was held remotely due to travel limitations caused by COVID-19.

In livestock-related topics, **fenbendazole** was petitioned for use as a parasiticide in poultry, but the NOSB **did not vote to allow this material for this use**. The NOSB felt that they did not hear from the poultry industry that this material was really needed. This material will continue to be prohibited for poultry use. The NOSB did vote to renew the listings for all livestock sunset materials, although concern was expressed over the allowance for EPA list 4 inerts in pesticide products.

The Compliance, Accreditation and Certification subcommittee gave a report on Human Capital Management, a topic that is a big focus of the industry right now as certifiers continue to face challenges finding qualified inspectors and reviewers.

In handling-related topics, the NOSB voted to **add low-acyl gellan gum to \$205.605**. This ingredient functions as a gelling agent in human and pet food and personal care products. The NOSB voted to **remove the following colors from \$205.606**: black currant juice color, blueberry juice color, carrot juice color, cherry juice color, grape juice

color, paprika color, pumpkin juice color, and turmeric extract color. Once removed, organic processors will need to use the organic versions of these colors. The subcommittee reported that these colors are available in sufficient organic quantities, so they do not need to be listed at \$205.606 ("Nonorganically produced agricultural products allowed as ingredients in or on processed products labeled as "organic."").

The NOSB also voted to **remove kelp, sweet potato starch, turkish bay leaves, and whey protein concentrate from \$205.606**. Again, the subcommittee stated that they didn't hear from stakeholders that there was a need for these listings at \$205.606 because there were sufficient organic quantities available.

For crops topics, the NOSB voted to **approve a proposal on marine macroalgae in crop fertility inputs**. The subcommittee had brought forth this proposal due to concerns that marine macroalgae use in organic farming is overharvested. This was a very significant proposal that (1) limits the sources of synthetic aquatic plant extracts allowed at \$205.601(j), and (2) prohibits non-synthetic marine macroalgae unless it is harvested according to specific harvesting parameters.

The NOSB also voted to **approve a proposal on wild, native fish for liquid fish products**. This proposal amends the listing for liquid fish products at \$205.601(j)(8) to require that liquid fish products be sourced from fish waste, bycatch, or invasive species, and it adds definitions for fish waste and bycatch to \$205.2. The subcommittee was also concerned about overharvesting fish products for use in organic production.

The NOSB voted to **send the proposal on paper (plant pots and other crop production aids) back** to subcommittee. The subcommittee will continue to work on this proposal and bring it forward again, most likely at the next NOSB meeting. The crops subcommittee received several comments requesting language changes to the proposed annotation, and they will attempt to address these points.

Finally, the NOSB voted to renew the listings for all crops sunset materials. Concern was expressed over the listing for EPA list 4 inerts, and the board had a robust discussion. The NOSB did **vote to pass a resolution** asking the NOP to work on the EPA list 4 inert listings.

Again, none of these NOSB decisions are finalized or in effect. Everything voted on by the NOSB will still need to be evaluated by the NOP. At that time, the NOP may write a proposed rule based on the passed NOSB recommendations, and the industry will have another chance to give feedback at that stage. Then, based on feedback, the NOP will either write a final rule, or not. So ultimately, this won't be the last time that we hear about some of these topics.

If you have any questions or want to get more involved in the public comment process at NOSB meetings, please reach out to Jen or Kyla at the PCO office (814-422-0251, jen@paorganic.org, kyla@paorganic.org).

"Nothing works like Udder Comfort!"

— Myron Martin



**PEACE HOLLOW FARM, Myron and Janet Martin
KNOXVILLE, MARYLAND, 80 cows, SCC 150,000
Certified organic and grass-fed**

"I've tried other products, but nothing works like Udder Comfort!™ We use it for swollen udders, as needed, especially to remove edema in fresh cows. And, for any cow with flakes or elevated SCC, I use it on that quarter," says third generation dairyman Myron Martin of Peace Hollow Farm near Knoxville, Maryland.

He operates the 80 cow dairy with his wife Janet and associates Michael and Angela Busselberg, with emphasis on producing high quality, organic, grass-fed A2 milk. They feed all grass and hay and maintain a 150,000 SCC average. Myron gives some of the credit for milk quality to Udder Comfort.

"It promptly takes down swelling," says Myron. "It is good to have this natural product, and it's handy for other things, like swollen hocks. I love the simplicity of Udder Comfort and how it really works. The comfort and results for the cows make me feel good."

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President's Message



BY TINA ELLOR, PCO ADVISORY BOARD PRESIDENT

As we've just wrapped up the uniquely challenging year of 2020, I'd like to wish everyone all the best for a happy, healthy, and prosperous New Year, with hope that 2021 finds us able to gather in person once again.

PCO Board and Staff recently gathered virtually for our annual board retreat. I feel, personally, that virtual will never compare to in-person, but the staff of PCO did an extraordinary job of making this meeting not only engaging and productive, but also a lot of fun. Over two Fridays in October, we did a lot of work on behalf of PCO: we held a quarterly Board meeting, had some very enlightening and helpful diversity, equity, and inclusion training from V. Randolph Brown Consulting, got to know our fellow board members and ourselves better through a DiSC profile review, and very importantly worked on and updated PCO's strategic plan with the help of Katherine DiMatteo, who acted as facilitator.

After the day's business had concluded on the first Friday, we had a virtual gathering with PCO staff, with some activities planned by staff member Stacey Budd, that really gave us a chance to get to know one another better. To wrap our second Friday of work, we had a virtual Board 'Happy Hour' with refreshments sent out ahead of time and special gifts from our Treasurer, Ted LeBow (see picture). Thanks Ted!

During our strategic planning update, we followed up on the seven strategic initiatives that were decided at our strategic planning meeting in July 2019 and included membership input from PCO's Annual Meeting in October of 2019. At this most current planning session we were challenged to really look hard at the big picture and ponder these things:

- **How do we define PCO's identity?**
- **What is a clear vision for PCO's future that gives us a measurable sense of accomplishment?**

Please give these things some thought and stay tuned, knowing that the discussions we had generated a myriad of great ideas to support PCO's vision, mission, and core values, which I encourage you to explore at paorganic.org/about/mission-vision-and-core-values/. As always, I would love to hear from you. If you call, please leave a message so I know you are not a telemarketer.

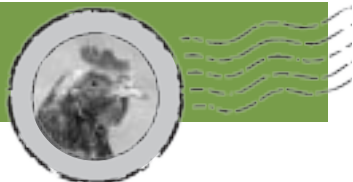
Before I end this message, I need to say a heartfelt thank you to outgoing board members Luke Howard, Beth

continued on page 15



PCO Board toasts Treasurer Ted LeBow in gratitude during virtual Board 'Happy Hour'.

Dear Aggy



Dear Aggy,

We just finished our first year of raising hemp for CBD extraction.

We're planning on getting our 2021 crop certified, but we have some specific questions about whether we can use feminized seed, and which extraction methods are allowed for our final product.

– H. Herb

Hi Mr. Herb,

There are certainly growing and processing questions which are very specific to hemp production. In order to optimize production, the use of feminized seed is preferred in commercial hemp production. There are two techniques for creating feminized hemp seeds:

- **Chemical induction** – Once the plant begins the 12-12 life cycle, the bud sites are exposed to colloidal silver, silver thiosulfate spray, or gibberellic acid. This induces the production of pollen by female plants.
- **Natural method** – The plant is stressed via natural methods (e.g. withhold of resources such as water/light/nutrients), which induces the female plant to produce pollen. This has a lower success rate than chemical induction and is not used to create feminized seeds on a commercial level.

To produce certified organic seed, the producer must use the natural method to induce feminization, and any treatments used in this process must be specifically approved for this use in organic production.

To produce a non-organic seed, the producer can use

any method to induce feminization and can use any other treatments on the mother plant or seeds on the mother plant. If a prohibited substance is used to chemically induce the production of pollen on an organic plant, the mother plant is no longer considered organic, and if field grown, certification status of the land may be affected.

Non-organic hemp seeds are permitted in organic production, provided that operators comply with PCO policy Origin of Crops – Seeds, which is based on commercial availability.

Regarding extraction: The mechanical extraction of hemp, such as cold-pressing, is permitted for organic processing. Protection from oxygen, light, and heat are critical during this process.

Extraction of organic hemp is most commonly performed with carbon dioxide or **certified organic** ethanol/alcohol. The use of butane or other synthetics for extraction is prohibited.

Got a question for Aggy?

- **Email to:**
pco@paorganic.org
- **Fax to:** 814-422-0255

Advertise in Organic Matters

Organic Matters is the quarterly newsletter of Pennsylvania Certified Organic, a non-profit organization serving growers, processors and handlers of organic products. Issues contain articles on the latest news and research in the organic industry, often highlighting our certified members. Approximately 1,500 copies of each publication are distributed directly to members and those requesting information about organic agriculture, and made available to the public at conferences, exhibits and educational programs in the Mid-Atlantic region.

Ad size	PRICING		Dimensions (in)
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The above rates refer to a single-issue ad placement and a subscription for ad placement in four consecutive issues.

A 15% discount is granted for the purchase of the 4-issue subscription.

For more information, please contact newsletter@paorganic.org or call the PCO Office at 814-422-0251.

PCO Core Values in Action

Living Our Core Values

DIANA UNDERWOOD, DIRECTOR OF OPERATIONS

Last issue, we shared how the PCO team is living our core values by taking steps to address social injustices both inside and outside of PCO. This is a slow and important process that PCO is deeply committed to. We will continue to communicate and be transparent about the action steps we are taking. In the last couple of months, PCO staff and board engaged in bias training, identified a professional consultant to aid us as we continue our work, and made a financial contribution to an organization working with minorities in agriculture. Our next step is to work with the professional team to make a plan for our social justice working group and ongoing trainings. This will allow us to be clear on our purpose and the steps that will support that purpose.

PCO core values continue to guide us not only in significant movements toward social justice but also in our day to day interactions, with each other and with our clients. We take pride in the work that we do every day and how that advances the organic industry and all communities worldwide but just as important as what we do, is how we do this important work.

The PCO staff and board contributed and adopted the below core values to drive how we go about our work. What is most important is that our values do not just live on paper or a webpage, but that they are modeled each day in the workplace. At PCO, we are confident this happens each and every day and to support this, each month, all staff vote on a fellow team member who really shined in modeling the below core values.

- **Keep people at the center of every action, interaction and decision** (*Provide Support*).
- **Promote restorative practices that improve the world for future generations** (*Engage Stewardship*).
- **Embrace transparency and integrity in all our work** (*Cultivate Trust*).

This edition will highlight our first core value, which focuses on keeping people at the center of all our actions. This core value means we design our interactions to support the needs of all of our stakeholders as we provide reliable and dependable service. Further, we honor and appreciate the hard work and commitment of others and choose to cultivate a positive attitude no matter what is happening.

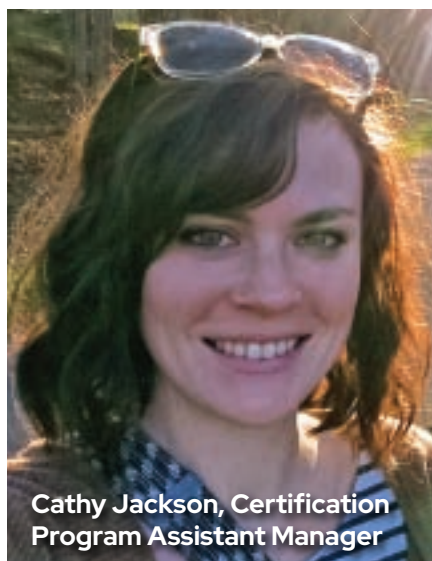
In order to better highlight how this core value shows up in the PCO workplace, we invited a couple award winners to spotlight in this issue. We could go on and on about the great work of our team, and here is what the PCO colleagues had to say:

- **Keep people at the center of every action, interaction, and decision (providing support)**

Cathy has done so much to provide support to the certification department. From running numerous reports and providing each Certification Specialist with a personalized Certification Report completion plan, training and providing assistance to newer Certification Specialists, allowing Program Assistants to shadow a Certification Report and performing statistics & monitoring, to completing new applicant Certification Reports; she is going above and beyond to ensure that the department is set up for success!

Craig helped cover phone calls for hundreds of clients during the hiring and training of new staff. He assisted with training the new Certification Specialists and is picking up extra Initial Review Reports (on top of his assigned load) and working long hours to get those files to inspectors...all without complaint, with grace, and making everyone's job easier!

It is these examples and the entire PCO team that make PCO such a great place to work. We hope you will join us in thanking them for their awesome work. Stay tuned in future issues as we continue to highlight our core values. Do you have some examples to share with us? We would love to hear from you, please email/call Diana Underwood (diana@paorganic.org or 814-422-0251 ext 215) with any



Cathy Jackson, Certification
Program Assistant Manager



Craig Shroyer, Certification
Specialist

examples you may have to share.

You can read more about the action steps we strive to model by visiting our Mission, Vision, and Values page on our website: paorganic.org/about/mission-vision-and-core-values/

CALL TO ACTION

Are you a BIPOC (Black, Indigenous, Person of Color) farmer or producer in our organic community open to sharing your story? We want to elevate your voice in an upcoming publication. We are interested in interviewing our client-members about their perspectives and experiences as we bring light to the injustices in our food system.

Interesting in participating? Please contact Stacey Budd (sbudd@paorganic.org or 814-422-0251 ext 230)

STAY CONNECTED, VISIT:
paorganic.org

President's Message

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Gugino, Ron Hoover, and Ross Duffield. I can't begin to express in this small space my gratitude on behalf of PCO, but also myself, for the time and the great work done by these board members for PCO. It is even harder to articulate how honored and privileged and grateful I feel that I had the opportunity to work with them and learn from them over the years.

Luke, as past President of the board for two terms, provided exemplary leadership through tumult and transition with kindness, strength, and humor, in addition to heading up the Governance Committee for a time and serving on the search committee to find and hire our new Executive Director.

This is actually the second time I have been privileged to serve with Ron. We served together once before on the PCO board in the early 2000's, practically a generation ago. In addition to serving as board secretary and serving on other committees, Ron headed up the Governance Committee for a number of years and whipped many a board procedure and document into shape and scouted out and encouraged many talented and dedicated potential board members to throw their hats into the ring to serve on the PCO board.

Beth is outgoing Managing Board Chair and has brought countless ideas, approaches, and inspiration to thorny



problems and issues, somehow finding clarity and being able to express it out of a jumble of chaotic inputs and ideas. Beth also served on the Executive Director Search Committee and her input and experience were invaluable, as they are on the Governance Committee where she also serves.

I didn't have as much time to get to know Ross, except on Governance Committee calls, but possibly sometime in the future we can get him back for another term.

If I haven't made it clear here and in past President's messages, serving on the PCO Board has been transformative for me and an experience that has provided more value to me than I could possibly ever return. I would once again encourage anyone who is interested to consider serving on the Board.

By now, I am hopeful that all of you cast your ballot for the slate of candidates nominated to fill open board positions in 2021. Membership voting is part of our legal requirements according to our bylaws, and the success of that process is an affirmation of the hard work the Governance Committee has done to present a slate of pretty extraordinary people who are willing to serve. As a member-based organization, we all need to do our part to participate in this annual process.

Wishing you all a bright 2021!

— Tina

Tina Ellor
tellor@phillipsmushroomfarms.com • 610-656-7250

Transitions

Inspiration for Organic: A Q & A with Transitioning Farmers

Brittany Reardon, along with her husband Michael, operate Mad Radish Farm, a 42-acre diversified farm in Dover, Pennsylvania. They began the process of transitioning their farm to become certified organic in September 2020. Brittany shares insights on Mad Radish's transition to organic with Emily Newman, a Rodale Institute Organic Crop Consultant. PCO thanks Brittany and Rodale for working to provide Mad Radish's story, and is available to discuss the requirements of becoming certified organic for anyone interested. Call or email our office to speak with one of our friendly staff.



1. Can you tell us a bit about your operation?

We are Mad Radish Farm. We do a vegetable CSA as well as farmers markets and little bit of wholesaling, as we've done in the past in New Hampshire. We ended up in Pennsylvania after looking for land for 2.5 years. We wanted to start a similar operation to what we were doing previously on rented land and be closer to family. We were looking for land that would support what we want to do with vegetables as well as grazing small livestock. In addition to vegetables, broilers, egg layers and grassfed lamb are in the works as we start out in our first season, 2021, on this new land.

We ended up buying a Christmas tree farm which was definitely unexpected, but has been really great. We opened it up for Cut Your Own Christmas trees from Thanksgiving onward. The goal was to get people to come to the farm and see what we are trying to do. We have had a lot of people come out to the farm and that's been nice. The trees, garlands, wreaths and make-your-own boxes of green provided an unexpected income source as we start

out. I am excited for next year. We'll see how maxed out we are by the late fall but I would like to do it again and see if we can't scale up somehow.

2. What is your inspiration to become certified organic?

My inspiration to organic and transitional organic is really from my past experience working for a transitioning farm. I worked with Flying Plow Farm for most of their transition and that definitely opened my eyes as to what it's like to be in that transitional period. We always wanted to be certified organic and have been drawn to the educational piece of what it means for us to be transitional and our responsibility as landowners and farmers within that. Transitioning and becoming certified organic is a great way for us to communicate to people what we are trying to do and how we are trying to be responsible with land management. We are committed to growing healthy, nutritious food for our community while managing the land for soil health, plant vitality and species diversity. That's what we really care about. All of that is why we want to be certified organic and why we think it's important to transition on this new land.

3. What has been the biggest stumbling block to certification and how are you working to overcome it?

I think the biggest stumbling block may be marketing and communicating to people in this area about the benefits of organic and why it might be worth it to put their food dollars to organic agriculture instead of conventional.

4. What advice would you give another farmer considering transitioning to organic?

We have always thought about diversity as being really important to what we do; being able to offer different types of products to people at various points in the season and not just focusing on one thing is really good. That feels very

Brittany working the Winter Farmer's Market of Keene, NH.





Michael holding Nigerian Dwarf goat kids in June 2016.

inherent to what we do and is almost something that I don't even think about anymore because we've always had vegetables and animals together. And now with the Christmas trees – it's been great to have another product that we can sell throughout the winter months. Whether it be season extension or selling meats and eggs in the winter time, having different times of year where you have income can be really important for small operations as they try to support themselves off the farm.

5. We all know that farming is extremely hard work, often requiring long days in difficult conditions. What motivates you to get up each day and keep going?

I originally started farming in college at the University of Vermont. I knew nothing about farming. I knew I wanted to do something in the environmental field. I started working at the student run farm called Common Ground. It was the coolest thing ever. I just loved it and was floored that people did this for their jobs. I was there all the time and knew that it was what I wanted to do. Pretty much every season after that I was farming. I was inspired to grow food. I definitely felt called to doing it and still do.

6. Is there anyone who has influenced you in your farming journey that you want to tell us about?

The farmers who I have worked for have inspired me and were my mentors and role models. Tom Paduano and Sara Rider of Flying Plow taught me a lot of what I know, in part because I worked for them for 5 years. There was a couple in Vermont too that I worked with, Toby Bashaw and Elizabeth Hendrix. They were really important to me in my farming journey.

7. Are there any fundamental farming "lessons" that you have learned in your farming career that you would like to share with farmers who will read your interview?



Michael, Meg, and Brittany worked at Mad Radish in 2016 and 2017.

I guess one of the biggest things for me with farming is just always having such a long list of things to do. I think most farmers and people in general can relate to this. Farming for me has always been a lot of prioritizing and acceptance of not being able to do everything you want to do. That's always been hard for me. I feel like I am still learning this: being able to accept what you can do and being okay with that. In reality if you are going to farm as a profession you are going to have to get over the fact that you are only going to get a certain number of things done.

Also, farming is very humbling for me because just when you think you have something figured out or you think you are doing really well, you may be making a big mistake and you'll have to live with the consequences of that. This has helped me grow as a person – making mistakes and moving forward after that. Realizing that I don't know everything.



Brittany Reardon, Farmer of Mad Radish, is working with Organic Crop Consultants at the Rodale Institute. The consulting services are currently FREE to Pennsylvania farmers transitioning to organic thanks to funding from the PA Department of Agriculture. Farmers who make the transition to organic can earn two to three times the price of their conventional counterparts and increase the value of their land, giving farmers a valuable asset for future generations. Rodale Institute is a trusted resource for technical assistance, regulatory advice and community connections. Consultations typically begin with a phone call, followed by a site visit. Support is provided throughout the entire transition to make sure farmers are on the right track. Farmers that are interested in receiving consulting services can contact the Rodale Institute by calling 610-683-1216 or by emailing Consulting@RodaleInstitute.org

Certification Update

Marissa Evankovich
Certification Program Manager



Many things have changed for us at PCO this past year, including adding some new certification specialists to the team, and shifting to being an almost fully remote office. As you probably have read in other mailings and updates from PCO, our changes in response to COVID-19 have kept us on our toes for things like trying to figure out how to complete inspections safely (and sometimes remotely!), how to mail reports and letters to clients in a timely manner, and in general figuring out how to navigate keeping organic integrity at the forefront, but also keeping everyone's safety top priority.

Despite the challenges, we have tried to make sure that we are still providing the same high quality service to you as always. This year, we have a hard deadline of 1/31/2021 to finish all certification reports, unlike past years which could sometimes wrap up in April. Part of the reason we are trying to get your reports done as early as possible this year is that we are planning to switch databases and want to give ourselves ample time to switch seamlessly into the new system. The new database system we are switching to is built specifically to administer certifications, including organic certification. Other certification agencies use this database system with great success, and we are hopeful that switching to this system will streamline many things internally and externally, resulting in efficiencies passed along directly to you.

The paperwork you submit for your annual update will still look the same as it did in years past. However, it will be entered into our new system and starting with your 2021 Initial Review Report, things will look different. Please note: your paperwork will still be due March 1, as in years past. **If you wish to add products, fields, farms, or other changes that might require an early season inspection, please note on your annual update form and please call or email PCO to let us know. Also, if you no**

longer wish to be certified, you must let us know so we can surrender your certificate.

If you have any questions, or need assistance with your certification report or annual update paperwork, please call PCO at 814-422-0251 and you will be directed to the appropriate person to help. Thank you for choosing PCO! We look forward to another year together!

Legislative Update

Kyla Smith
Certification Director



ORGANIC TRADE ASSOCIATION LAWSUIT ON ORGANIC ANIMAL WELFARE RULE MOVES TO FINAL STAGES

The Organic Trade Association's (OTA) lawsuit against the U.S. Department of Agriculture to uphold organic animal welfare standards and implement the Organic Livestock and Poultry Practices (OLPP) final regulation has moved to its final stages. In November 2020, OTA filed an updated complaint to the court laying out the case from the time of the filing of the original lawsuit in September 2017 through the most recent developments. This compliant reiterated OTA's original claims that in delaying and ultimately rescinding the OLPP final regulation, USDA acted in an illegal and capricious way as they failed to consult with the National Organic Standards Board prior to the withdrawal of the already final rule, based its action on seriously flawed data and economic assumptions, and was tainted by an "irrevocably closed mind." This submission comes on the heels of the case being remanded back to USDA in order to republish the economic analysis report for public comment. The USDA issued the final economic analysis report without fixing any errors, acknowledging it was flawed beyond repair with the time the courts allowed them in the remand.

The USDA had until Nov. 16 to file a response to the



Opportunity to Amplify the Voice of Small Organic Farmers

Do you have an interest in influencing the Organic Trade Association's (OTA) national policy work to better support the needs of small farmers? Do you desire direct news and expert analysis of the change in organic regulations that will affect your business? PCO-certified farms with annual organic sales less than \$250,000 have an opportunity to become Farmstead Members of the OTA for just \$50 per year. Benefits include amplifying the small farmer voice in Washington and a vote for OTA's Board of Directors.

Interested? Check out www.ota.com/farmstead for more information.

association's amended complaint. In December, OTA filed a Motion for Summary Judgment. By the end of February, the judge will have the entire case in front of them and will be able to make a final ruling in this case.

OTA's request of the court remains the same: rule the USDA's rescission of the OLPP rule unlawful, and issue an order making the OLPP effective. OTA remains confident that the court will rule in their favor, and that the organic sector will continue to advance.

Materials Update

Jen Berkebile
Materials Program Manager



Happy New Year! I hope that you all had a restful and safe holiday season. The PCO Materials Team is heading into 2021 refreshed and renewed after our holiday break. Thank you for your patience while we were out of the office for the holidays. If you have any outstanding material reviews, don't hesitate to contact us at 814-422-0251 for an update.

Please note the following status changes for materials reviewed by PCO for use by certified operations:

ATTENTION: **AGRO GOLD WS by Agro Research International LLC** has been found to contain Diquat and Glyphosate, ingredients that are prohibited for use on organic operations. Therefore, AGRO GOLD WS by Agro Research International LLC is **prohibited** for use on organic operations, and any operators using this product must discontinue use immediately. If you were using this product, please contact the PCO office at 814-422-0251 to confirm that you have discontinued use. Please let us know if you have any questions.

ALLOWED

■ Crop Materials

- **Cal Damp 500 Fines by New Enterprise Stone & Lime Co., Inc./Martin Limestone** is allowed as a fertilizer/soil amendment
- **Eubio NBS (C10) by Eubio Tec** is allowed as a crop production aid
- **Neo Carrier from Agri-Neo Inc.** is allowed as a post-harvest sanitizer with the following restriction:

Peracetic Acid (Post Harvest). For use in wash and/or rinse water according to FDA limitation. §205.605(b)

■ Livestock Materials

- **Hydr Ate Hydration Powder by Animal Science Products, Inc.,** is allowed as a livestock medical treatment with the following restriction:

Medical Treatment. Must not be administered in the absence of illness. Records must be kept documenting specific animal treated, treatment/dosage used, and duration of treatment. §205.238(b)

- **Organic Apple Cider Vinegar from Oregon Ag** is now allowed as a livestock feed additive/supplement
- **Synergy Udder Spray from Synergy Animal Products, Inc.,** is allowed as a teat dip/udder care product

PROHIBITED – Operators must immediately discontinue use of these products unless otherwise noted.

■ Crop Materials

- **Compost, Dairy Manure and Bird Compost from Kreider Farm** are prohibited as fertilizers/soil amendments
- **Silo Maxx Special from Peak Forage Solutions, Inc.,** is prohibited as a forage treatment

■ Livestock Materials

- **Tandem Plus Barrier from IBA, Inc.,** is now prohibited as a teat dip/udder care product
- **Tri Plex Teat Dip NPE Free from IBA, Inc.,** is now prohibited as a teat dip/udder care product

■ Processing Materials

- **Gil CitroX from Gilmer Industries, Inc.,** is prohibited as a food contact sanitizer/antimicrobial

Standards and Policy Update

Jen Berkebile, Materials Program Manager

ORIGIN OF LIVESTOCK UPDATE

During the Fall 2020 National Organic Standards Board meeting, Dr. Jenny Tucker, Deputy Administrator of the National Organic Program (NOP), reiterated that origin of livestock continues to be a priority for the NOP. However, Dr. Tucker announced that instead of moving to a final rule on Origin of Livestock, as mandated in the FY20 Appropriations Bill, the NOP is developing a second proposed rule to be published for public comment. The NOP states that legal complexities arose during review of the final rule and that a new proposed rule is needed to address issues including: 1) regulatory unit (producer or operation), 2) movement of transitioned cows, and 3) whether the regulation falls within authority of the Organic Foods Production Act.

Consistent implementation by operations and certifier enforcement of the origin of livestock regulations continue to be a challenge. As such, until the NOP enacts a final rule, the organic industry will continue to operate on an unlevel playing field and must navigate the associated consequences.

New Members

PCO Welcomes 4th Quarter New Members!

NEWLY CERTIFIED ORGANIC

Adam Raber
Sugarcreek, OH

AgroRefiner, LLC
New York, NY

Alan Reinford
Sligo, PA

**Allen Distribution
Building 19 Custom
Packaging**
Carlisle, PA

Allen Koontz
Bedford, PA

Amos E. Lee
Bombay, NY

Amos Z. Beiler
Millersburg, PA

Andrew Speicher
Mount Joy, PA

Andy Reich
Mount Joy, PA

**Arrowhead Wine
Cellars Inc.**
North East, PA

Ben T. Fisher
Paradise, PA

Brendon Zimmerman
Fredericksburg, PA

Brian Musser
Fredericksburg, PA

Bryan Miller
Kreamer, PA

Chris L. Byler
Moir, NY

**CLK Property
Management**
Danielsville, PA

Country Creamery
Greencastle, PA

Darin Brooks
Killbuck, OH

David J Miller
Sugarcreek, OH

David J. Beiler
Spring Run, PA

Eat the Change
Bethesda, MD

Edwin Neidig
Fredericksburg, PA

Elmer Brenneman
Meyersdale, PA

Elwayne Weaver
Quakertown, PA

Glenn Martin
Penn Yan, NY

**Hazleton
AgriBusiness LLC**
Rochester, NY

Jacob Brubaker
Kutztown, PA

Jeff Cook
Sugarcreek, OH

Jeff Rohrer
Telford, PA

Jesse S. Beiler
Danville, PA

Joe J. Miller
Reynoldsville, PA

John Nolt
Kreamer, PA

Jordan Tomb's LLC
Pittsburgh, PA

**Joseph L.
Kukenberger**
Cooperstown, NY

Joseph Nolt
Fredericksburg, PA

**Kenneth
Newswanger**
Middlesex, NY

**King's Family Farms
LLC**
New Oxford, PA

**Kreider Dairy Farms,
Inc.**
Manheim, PA

**Kriemhild Dairy
Farms LLC**
Hamilton, NY

Linford Martin
Fredericksburg, PA

Loyal Young
Sugarcreek, OH

Luke W. Newswanger
Kutztown, PA

Mahlon Weaver
Dillsburg, PA

**Mark and Rosene
Zimmerman**
Penn Yan, NY

Marty Ellis
Hammond, NY

**Menno L.
Swartzentruber**
Antwerp, NY

Michael Zimmerman
Fredericksburg, PA

Moyer Poultry Farm
Fredericksburg, PA

**Newbold Canna
Fields**
The Plains, VA

**Pete & Gerry's
Organics LLC
(Pleasant View Farm)**
Monroe, NH

**Regenerative Farms
LLC**
New Hope, PA

Ricky Manwiller
Fredericksburg, PA

**RMJ Bloomsburg
LLC**
Old Tappan, NJ

Roy R. Sauder
Stanley, NY

Samuel S. Beiler
Millville, PA

**Snouts and Sprouts
LLC**
Pottstown, PA

Stanley Stahl
Granville Summit, PA

**Thrushwood Farms
Quality Meats, Inc.**
Galesburg, IL

Tom Berry
New York, NY

VAE LLC
Oley, PA

**Whitmoyer Cattle
LLC**
Turbotville, PA

**Windy Ridge
Farmstead LLC**
Apple Creek, OH

ORGANIC PLUS TRUST CERTIFIED

Alta Waltz
Cincinnati, NY

Amos E Lee
Bombay, NY

Chris L. Byler
Moir, NY

Devon Yoder
Morrisville, NY

Earl & Marlene Fox
Branchport, NY

James & Tina Hamn
Fort Plain, NY

James Hoover
Dundee, NY

John Hershberger
Norwich, NY

Mahlon Weaver
Dillsburg, PA

Marty Ellis
Hammond, NY

**Menno L.
Swartzentruber**
Antwerp, NY

**Worcester
Creameries**
Roxbury, NY

BUSINESS

Arkion Life Science
Garnett Valley, PA

Arm and Hammer
Mason City, IA

**Pure Life Organic
Seeds**
Las Vegas, NV

Qvortex LLC
Guymon, OK

ADVOCATE

Jay Wells
Alexandria, VA

Event Calendar

FEBRUARY

February 1-5

PASA

2021 Sustainable Agriculture Conference

Live Virtual Main Conference
pasafarming.org

February 7-March 4

NOFA-VT

39th Annual Winter Conference
Honor-Energize-Imagine
Virtual conference
nofavt.org/conference

February 10-15

OEFFA

42nd Annual Conference
Our Time: Essential Links for a Strong Food Chain
Virtual conference
conference.oeffa.org

MARCH

March 4, 9am-5pm

NECCC

2021 Northeast Cover Crops Council
Virtual Conference
northeastcovercrops.com/
2021-conference

APRIL

April 14, 2-3pm

Webinar: Research Update - Reducing Tillage in Organic Grain Systems
Rodale Institute
<https://rodaleinstitute.org/education/webinars>
610-683-1400

April 28, 2-3pm

Webinar: Research Update – Grain Nutrient Density in the Farming Systems Trial
Rodale Institute
rodaleinstitute.org/education/webinars
610-683-1400

Marketplace

LIVESTOCK

Certified Organic Dairy Herd for sale. Holsteins Jerseys. AI sired & bred. Prices per head. 36 Milking-\$1250. 10 Dry-\$1100. 18 Springers-\$1000. 8 Open 2018 Heifers-\$700. 33 '19 Heifers-\$600. 21 '20 Heifers-\$500. Western PA. Leave message. 814-748-2900. Indiana County.

EQUIPMENT

Farm cultivators for sale. Four and six rows; John Deere and IH, ready to go to work (both rebuilt). Contact Carl Modica for prices. 814-267-5640. Somerset County.

SERVICES

Ag plastic recycling I can use black and white bunker covers, bale wrap, plastic twine, clear stretch film, greenhouse covers, flats, and pots. Call for details. 717-658-9660. Franklin County, PA.

LAND FOR SALE/RENT

Certified Organic Land for Sale

- 17-acre parcel with a carriage house, horse shed, and fenced pasture (in grass). \$350,000
 - 40-acre parcel (30 acres in grass) \$650,000.
- Contact 717-476-1220. York County.

STAY CONNECTED, VISIT:
paorganic.org



LAKEVIEW ORGANIC GRAIN

Box 361, 119 Hamilton Place
Penn Yan, NY 14527
315-531-1038
www.lakevieworganicgrain.com

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FARMER RESOURCES:

- Rodale Institute Organic Crop Consulting
Services available nationwide:
RodaleInstitute.org/Consulting
- Digital webinars, online courses,
and other educational resources:
RodaleInstitute.org/Education
- Research Updates: RodaleInstitute.org/Science

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